

Appl. No. 09/887,966
Amdt. dated
Reply to Office Action of February 26, 2004

REMARKS

In the aforementioned Office communication, the Examiner correctly noted a number of informalities in the claims and rejected claims 5-8 and 16-20 under Section 112. Those informalities have been corrected and the rejection of the claims under Section 112 is therefore felt to have been overcome. The allowance of claims 1-4 is acknowledged. Claim 19 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under Section 112 and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 19 has been cancelled herein and rewritten as new independent claim 21 while correcting the formalities forming the basis of the rejection under Section 112. Accordingly, claim 21 is felt to be in allowable form. Claims 16-18 and 20 have been rejected under Section 102(b) as being anticipated by the patent to Christie et al. (US 3,149,003).

With regard to the rejection of claims 16-18 and 20 under Section 102(b) as being anticipated by the patent to Christie et al., claim 16 has been amended to state that the method described therein is directed to relieving stress in a fabric having multiple layers of material. It will be noted that the first paragraph of the claim now states, "providing a three-dimensional fabric comprising multiple layers of materials." It is believed this amendment to claim 16 upon which claim 17, 18 and 20 are dependant, patentably distinguishes the claim from the Christie patent for the same reason claim 1 is distinguishable from the Christie patent. Specifically, in the Examiner's indicated allowance of claim 1, she indicated the claim is allowable since the recited steps are not disclosed in the prior art as being performed on a fabric having at least three layers. The process described in the Christie patent is applicable to a single layer of material.

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Accordingly, the reference to the method of claim 16 being applicable to a fabric of multiple layers is therefore now felt to be in allowable form along with claims 17, 18 and 20 which are dependent thereon.

There being no other objections or rejections of the application which have not been remedied herein, it is felt the application is in condition for allowance and such action is courteously requested.

Dated this 13 day of May 2004.

Respectfully submitted,



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